

# Stop the Expansion of Limited Mining Operations to New Mineral Types!

*The risk to neighboring property owners and water resources is too high.*

## BACKGROUND: What are Limited Mining Operations (LMOs)?

LMOs are operations for mining inert materials like sand and gravel that cover less than 15 acres, about the size of 12 football fields. Unlike Small Mines, **LMOs are exempt from the state's mining permit process**. Only a very short application and small bond are needed. They are not subject to public review or input. In other words, LMOs require less oversight and are exempt from just about all of the state's non-coal Environmental Protection and Performance Standards.

## The current LMO process is *already* flawed.

How would you like to be told that your new neighbor will be a 15-acre hole in the ground, potentially harming your air and water quantity and quality? Under the current LMO approval process, *this is a real possibility*.

- **Mining even inert materials can cause major concerns** for neighboring properties, including changes in water quality and quantity, dust, heavy truck traffic on local roads, noise, and loss of property value.
- **Without public comment and meaningful information** in an application about the project to comment on, neighbors have almost no ability to raise their concerns.

## Expanding LMOs will make matters even worse.

Unfortunately, by reviving a version of Senate File 44 from the past legislative session, the Joint Minerals Committee is **seeking to massively expand the types of minerals allowed under the LMO category**.

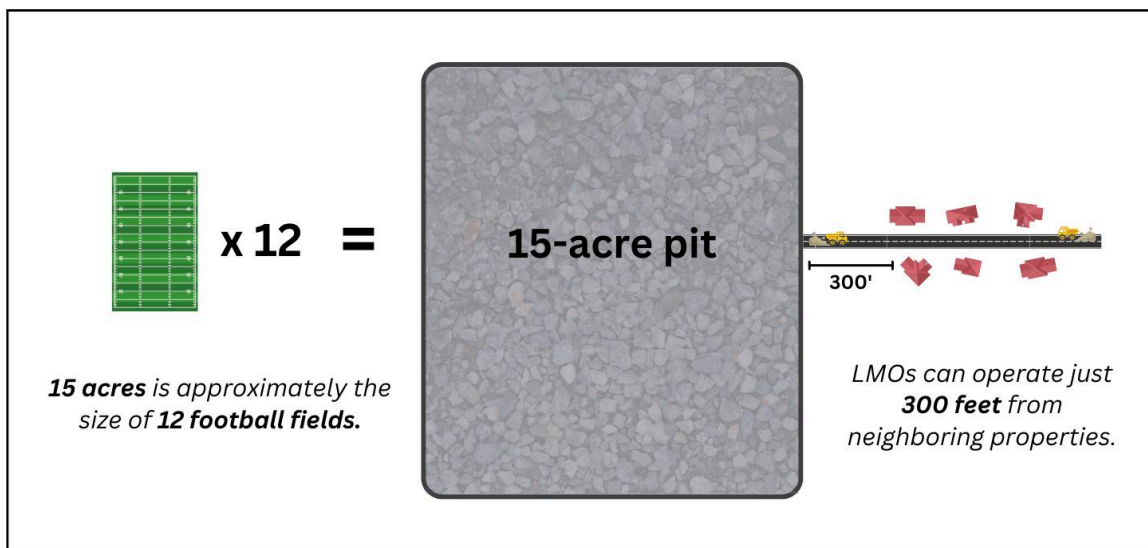
- This new bill would **expand the LMO category** to include almost all mineral types, which would increase the number of LMOs, the people impacted by them, and the chances of environmental harm.
- This bill would **eliminate public comment** for mining operations that pose greater health and environmental risks than the minerals currently allowed in LMOs, as **the new minerals come with additional dangers**.
- For sand and gravel LMOs, some counties require conditional use permits, allowing local elected officials and the public to have a say in some locations. This would *not* be possible for new minerals, because, unlike sand and gravel, which are part of the county-regulated surface estate, other minerals belong to the mineral estate, which counties cannot control.
- This bill would **impact property values, enjoyment and use of private land, and quality of life**. Expanding LMOs will only make these impacts more prevalent in Wyoming communities

- As many Casper citizens can tell you from their experience fighting a proposed gravel LMO in their backyards, the current LMO process is not adequate and needs to be revised, *not expanded*.

## State statute and Department of Environmental Quality rules already recognize the dangers of additional mineral types.

- The material removed in the process of mining these additional minerals (including lithium, gold, and lead) can contain **acid-forming substances**, requiring preventative measures to protect groundwater, surface water, and human and animal health.
- Such preventative measures exist in the mine permit process, but would be eliminated by including them in the LMO permit exemption.
- **Full-cost bonding**, which would pay for cleanup if harm is done, is important because of the additional environmental concerns that come with mining new minerals. While the draft bill suggests full-cost bonding for these new minerals, it **is not possible** with the limited information required in the one-page LMO application.

## How large is a 15-acre mine?



*The Minerals Committee will vote on whether or not to expand LMOs at the beginning of their meeting in Casper on **Tuesday, July 30**.*

**Take action: Tell the Minerals Committee to VOTE NO on expanding Limited Mining Operations. Visit [qrco.de/NoLMOExpansion](http://qrco.de/NoLMOExpansion) or scan the QR code.**



If you prefer, you can message committee members directly at the addresses below:

[dan.dockstader@wyoleg.gov](mailto:dan.dockstader@wyoleg.gov); [ed.cooper@wyoleg.gov](mailto:ed.cooper@wyoleg.gov); [affie.ellis@wyoleg.gov](mailto:affie.ellis@wyoleg.gov); [stacy.jones@wyoleg.gov](mailto:stacy.jones@wyoleg.gov); [chris.rothfuss@wyoleg.gov](mailto:chris.rothfuss@wyoleg.gov) ;  
[donald.burkhart@wyoleg.gov](mailto:donald.burkhart@wyoleg.gov); [dalton.banks@wyoleg.gov](mailto:dalton.banks@wyoleg.gov); [jon.conrad@wyoleg.gov](mailto:jon.conrad@wyoleg.gov); [scott.heiner@wyoleg.gov](mailto:scott.heiner@wyoleg.gov); [chris.knapp@wyoleg.gov](mailto:chris.knapp@wyoleg.gov);  
[jt.larson@wyoleg.gov](mailto:jt.larson@wyoleg.gov); [martha.lawley@wyoleg.gov](mailto:martha.lawley@wyoleg.gov); [reuben.tarver@wyoleg.gov](mailto:reuben.tarver@wyoleg.gov); [cyrus.western@wyoleg.gov](mailto:cyrus.western@wyoleg.gov)